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President's Message

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

The September 12 program and meeting was our first in-person session as the 2022 tour season winds down. What a joy it was to be in the same room with colleagues. Even though I've toured the Byers-Evans House and Center for Colorado Women's History on many occasions, this time was a different experience.

Cat Jensen, the Guest Services Coordinator and Educator at the Center for Colorado Women's History, set up an interpretive experience for us. Instead of relating facts about the rooms and objects in them, she invited us to develop a relationship as though we were the occupants. As the sun set outside and the lighting became dimmer inside, I felt less of a stranger in the space. Because of my engagement with the house, I will be incorporating her technique into my narratives to engage my guests.

Her technique relies on curated objects in the rooms to which she draws our attention and asks us to imagine using them in the room. Objects included children's toys, Mr. Evans's desk, the grand piano in the music room, and various portraits. Our time in the house felt neither overwhelming nor rushed. I learned more than I expected to at the program.

Thanks to Mark Blaising and Cat Jensen for the evening.

Unfortunately, this tour could not be live streamed nor recorded because of the low lighting in the house. Generally, program/meetings will be available live, then in a recorded form via the RMGA website. Do you know ways to stream and record meetings that are hybrid (participants are joining in-person and online)? Please contact any Board member to offer your expertise.

Swapping books and resource materials at monthly meetings is proving popular. The tub of materials will be available at future meetings. Bring books and pamphlets that you would like to share [GOVCONRECAPS](#) with other members. Leave one, take one. Talking about research and swapping materials is a great way to bond during any of our meetings.

RMGA members need to determine in what ways the organization is beneficial to them, then join to actualize that vision. Please email your ideas and thoughts about the future direction of the organization to

rmgapresident@rockymountaintourguides.com. [MEMBMEETING](#)
S— Mike Pearl, President, RMGA

A Member of



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	1
<u>From the Editor</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Committee Updates</u>	<u>2-6</u>
<u>GOVCON RECAPS</u>	<u>4-8</u>
<u>Organization Activities</u>	<u>8,9</u>
<u>NFTGA News</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOOD TOURS</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Board of Directors Meetings</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Members Meetings</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Purpose of RMGA</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Officers and Chairpersons</u>	<u>12</u>

FROM THE EDITOR

Deadline for submissions for the November 2022 *Guide Line* is **Saturday, October 29**. Future contributions should be emailed to *Guide Line* editor Eileen Pearl at rmgaeditor@rockymountaintourguides.com. If anyone has photos to share, please send them along with either a short description and/or names.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Communications Committee

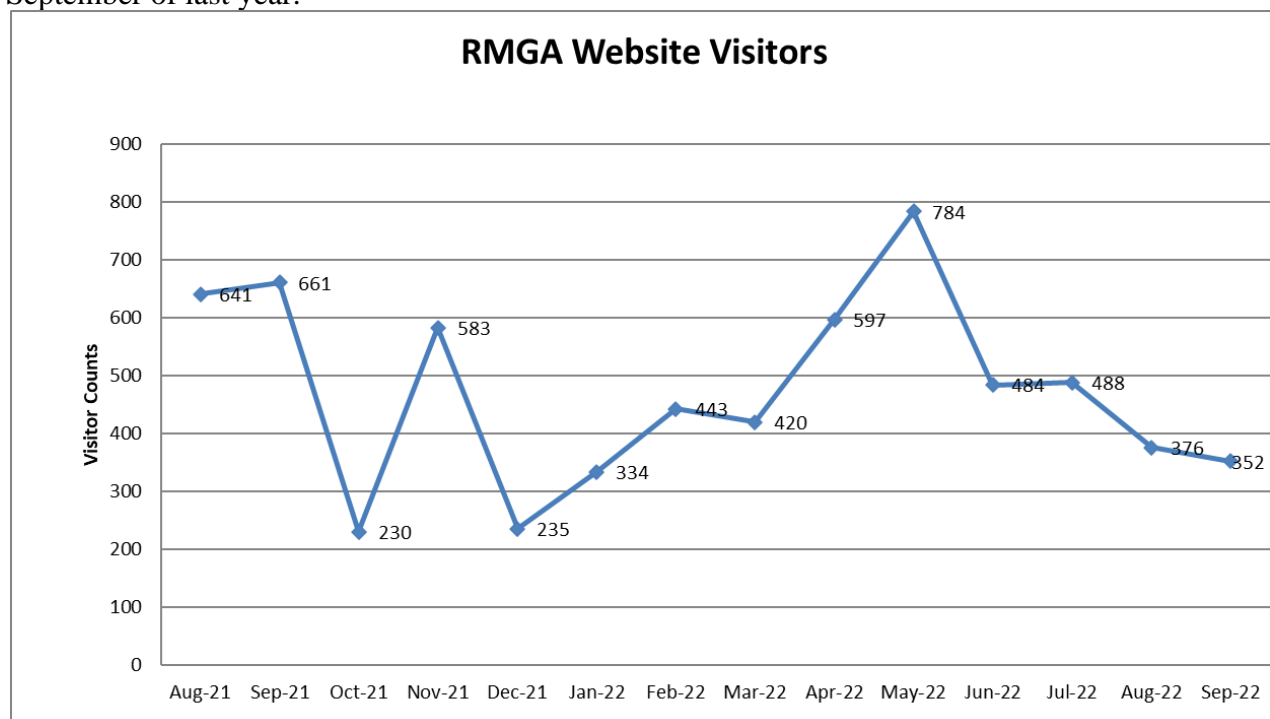
Submitted by Tom Jensen, Communications Committee Chair

What's New on the Website?

- ***Added September Program Announcement***
- ***Added September 19th version of Membership Roster***

Monthly Visitors to the RMGA Website

The monthly visitor to our website remains constant. Here is a comparison with August and September of last year.



Profile Update

If you have changes to your Profile, send them to rmgawebsite@rockymountaintourguides.com.

E-mail distribution

The distribution of e-mails continues to be done on a temporary basis. If anyone is interested in sending out the e-mail blasts, contact Mike Pearl at rmgapresident@rockyountaintourguides.com. The contact list is current with the membership roster. If you are not receiving e-mails please contact Tom Jensen @ rmgacommunications@rockymountaintourguides.com.

Facebook

Be sure to join the RMGA Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RMGAssoc>. You'll find postings of upcoming events, industry happenings, and photos. All members are welcome send in their pictures or posting.

Membership Committee

Submitted by Mike Pearl, Membership Committee Chair

The RMGA Board of Directors thanks you for your membership. The latest membership directory is posted on the Members Only page of the RMGA Website.

RMGA welcomes new members! Do your part to improve and expand RMGA's knowledge base by increasing our membership roster. Invite tour guides to RMGA's next meeting in-person or on Zoom. Send their contact information to Membership Committee Chair [Mike Pearl](#) so that they can be included on the Zoom Meeting Invitation.

Nominations Committee

No submission this month.

Program Committee

Submitted by J. Mark Blaising, Program Committee Chair

OCTOBER PROGRAM

RMGA in-person Membership Meeting #2 for 2022.

We have brought back live, in person meetings. The only thing missing is you! Please join us Monday, October 10th 2022 at the Center on Colfax 1301 E Colfax Ave; Denver, CO 80218 at 6 PM.

The Center serves members of the LGBTQ community of Colorado. It sponsors the Pride Weekend Celebrations and parade in June and provides services year-round. David Duffield is the Director of the History Project that collects and archives oral histories of the community, provides walking tours, curates museum exhibits and shares stories to a wider audience. He will be giving a presentation on some of the activities of the project as well as sharing information regarding the types of services available and if possible, a tour of the facility. As a bonus, hear about the wild historical event in Denver Crimefighting history that took place on the site around a hundred years ago.

The importance of diversity and inclusion was made repeatedly at the Colorado Tourist Office's Governors Conference this year. This is especially relevant to the foreign travelers the CTO hopes to lure back to Colorado. The RMGA needs your attendance and support if we are to continue live programming. Please join us.

Public Relations Committee

Submitted by Tom Jensen, Public Relations Committee Chair



Report on the 2022 Governor's Tourism Conference by Tom Jensen

Also, see Mark Blaising's GovCon write-up on pages 7,8 for a first-time attendee's perspective of the conference.

The Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference was held in Snowmass on September 21st to 23rd. Official representatives of RMGA were Mark Blaising and Tom Jensen. Other RMGA members at the Conference were Michelle Kempema (via Zoom at the Tour Colorado meeting), Dave Lively, and Barb Bowman.

I felt there were two overall focuses of the conference -- how to sustain the natural beauty of our state with an increasing number of visitors and the industry recovery from two dismal years.

The general consensus is recovery is underway, but we have not returned to the level of 2019. Individual travel is back; group travel is struggling. To reach 2019 levels, business travel will not recover until 2026; international travel recovers in 2025.

One thing impacting international travel is the length of time required to get a visa to travel into the US for those countries that require a visa. The average wait is 440 days! For Mexico it is 568 days. US Travel's goal in working with the government is to get this to 21 days. They need our support. Other issues are the US Dollar exchange rate and inflation. The Infrastructure Bill is huge for travel with the improvements to roads, airports, ports, etc.

Many destinations, especially those outside the Front Range and key Mountain Communities, are still developing plans to increase their number of visitors. At the same time, they are seeking ways to limit the impact of these visitors on the environment, to the residents, and the earth. A session was dedicated on how we can educate visitors on "Caring for Colorado" by implementing the tools developed by Leave No Trace and Care for Colorado.

The conference featured two motivational speakers:

1. One session was how we can become changemakers. The world can use more empathy. Empathy is a learned compassion. Speaker Mallory provided us with the steps to become more empathetic. Mallory is walking 26 individual miles, with 26 impoverished women, in 26 countries around the world to support each of the women's projects.
2. The other session was The Cube of Creativity – Why adding Constraints Sparks Innovation, Action & Builds Business

If you are finding it difficult to be creative when resolving an issue or problem, maybe it's because the possibilities are unlimited. Limit the options – set a time limit, throw out the unreasonable options, add more constraints and identify what happens if we don't or do succeed.

In attending the Governor's Conference over the past several years I've noticed that destinations that were just learning to market themselves have now matured in their marketing to attract more visitors. They are moving into the management of visitors. Other destinations are just beginning at the tourism development life cycle.

A couple of breakout sessions stood out:

- One session was on the Web3: The Future of the Internet beyond the Skepticism, Snark, and Scams. Admittedly this was way over my head, but interesting on how it might be applied to travel. Web3 will take us beyond the current peer-to-peer (i.e., Facebook) read/write of Web2. It involves Blockchains, NFTs and Cryptos.
- Another session was on Building a Care for Colorado Community. Impact from outdoor recreation affects wildlife, soils, vegetation, water resources, and people. Two programs, Leave no Trace and Care for Colorado, are working to education visitors (and locals, too) on Caring for Colorado. We can help too by educating our groups on how to protect our natural resources. <https://www.colorado.com/CareForColorado>

Prior to the Conference start, Tour Colorado held a member meeting. Points raised at that meeting:

- Many members said they are doing better, but things are different from before the pandemic
- Tour operators are creating new itineraries
- Tour operators are finding it difficult to have supplier's, such as hotels or coach operators, provide contracts for 2-3 years in advance
- Ute Sky Casino continues to get repeat tours, but not the one-off groups created by smaller tour operators
- Tour operators are going with smaller 15 PAX vans; offering more intimate trips; catering to families, weddings; retreats
- Tour Operators are doing more customized travel vs. scheduled
- Biggest percentage of business is young people/students and those over 51 years
- There are 5,000 fewer motor coaches operating now that in 2019. Issues are fuel, labor, insurance
- Passengers want the same level of service since they are paying more. Operators are trying to keep the price down by cutting services
- The future will bring smaller group sizes, more flexibility in restaurant choices, unstructured time, and individual experiences
- Tour Operators are changing the types of itineraries they are offering. More will be off the beaten path. Hub and Spoke itineraries will be utilized – group stays in one location and takes trips from that location. For example, Colorado Springs is ideal for this – one day Canon City with the Royal George, Railroad, Rafting; one day mountaineering with Pikes Peak; one day the mining history of Cripple Creek and Victor.

To prepare for the future here are three things you can do:

- o Be flexible
- o Be responsive
- o Be creative



Notes From a First-time Attendee of the Governor's Conference on Tourism

Submitted by Mark Blaising, Vice President, RMGA

The drive from Denver to Snowmass reminded why we love this state. Gorgeous views, famed color and history provided a greatest hits of tourist development and opportunity. It also revealed how fragile it is. The stretch of I70 in Glenwood Canyon remains vulnerable to the elements. Fires in the canyon have left burn scars near the thinnest sections of the roadway. Heavy rains bring the possibility of slides and closure cutting off the western slope and creating long detours. Snowmass Village and the Viewline Hotel proved a great location for the conference. The layout and facilities were convenient, clean and comfortable. The mayor described some recent improvements in the village including a new base village that offers a large community gathering space. The amount of information from the Colorado Tourist Office, Governor's Conference 2022 was both broad and detailed. I hope to share in more detail at future RMGA meetings. For now here are a few takeaways:

Enthusiasm and a general purpose to move on from the pandemic. Acknowledging the many headwinds and issues related to travel, most attendees have a positive outlook. The changes that have occurred have brought both pain and opportunity.

The era of large coach travel has passed. There was a near universal agreement that travelers are more comfortable in smaller groups. During the pandemic a trend of larger family and friend gatherings appeared where smaller sprinter vans were employed. This has also grown within other segments. There is a growing aversion among smaller destinations to hosting a large dump of people that the staffing infrastructure is no longer able to support.

Corporate Travel still stalled. Many large corporations such as Google continue to have restrictive travel policies and the outlook doesn't look like it will be changing much soon. On the plus side, more smaller and mid-size companies are hitting the road in increasing numbers.

International, nascent steps to recovery. The pandemic and the various travel restrictions in countries worldwide deeply impacted the international travel market. China remains closed off, but Japan is beginning to reopen to international travel giving hope to a recovery process in Asian travel to US and Colorado. Colorado Tourist Office research showed that international visitors especially in Europe are very concerned about sustainability efforts. A third of the German public saying those efforts are crucial to their decision-making process. During the pandemic, travel from Mexico soared due to the relative ease of travel between the two countries. Australia looks to be a growth market. After two years being very restricted in travel options there is a pent-up demand to visit places unlike those in Australia with our mountains being a fine example.

Sustainability and diversity were cited often and RMGA member Barbara Bowman gave a well-attended break out session devoted to the principles of Colorado Cares and ways to implement them. Looking to find opportunities to lure new travelers to Colorado, there has been a concerted effort to recognize the importance of diversity in both travelers and staff especially those in traditionally underserved communities. These efforts would be a good place to dove tail with RMGA new member recruitment.

The CTO's Gov-Con 2022 was a great effort to connect and reconnect members after the worst effects of the pandemic. There was sober reflection as to the impact to travel in Colorado as well as a faith that Colorado is well positioned to recover and grow in the years ahead.

ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

Rocky Mountain Guides Association represents professional tour guides in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Region to tourism-related organizations. As vice president and president, Mark Blaising and I meet with other leaders of US tour guide associations and guilds through monthly Zoom meetings. We report to RMGA members the information from those meetings.

Tom Jensen and the Public Relations Committee lead in keeping RMGA and us professional tour guides in the forefront of the minds of local tourism industry leaders. He is our liaison to VISIT Denver, the Colorado Tourism Organization, VISIT Colorado Springs, and Tour Colorado, among other such organizations. Do you know of a tourism organization with which RMGA should be affiliated? Contact Tom with information.

At the request of members, the Board of Directors will conduct a survey of the professional members regarding their tour activities for the 2022 season. The brief survey will seek information about the types and frequency of tours that members give and ranges of pay members receive for their services. The purpose of the survey is to describe the status of the profession in the Rocky Mountain region by statistical means. Respondents will remain anonymous, responses will be aggregated, and results will be published in the *Guide Line*. Send your ideas about topics and questions to RMGA President [Mike Pearl](#).

RMGA Facebook Page

Another way for members to communicate with each other is the RMGA Facebook page. Find it at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RMGAssoc>. It's a great place for members to post pictures and tidbits of information that we all can use.

RMGA Guide Line

The official way that RMGA as an organization communicates with members is by means of the newsletter, *Guide Line*, published September through May. Editor Eileen Pearl collects articles submitted by members for the benefit of professional tour guiding. In addition to RMGA members, the *Guide Line* is sent to the Colorado Tourism Organization (CTO), the National Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (NFTGA), and other tourism-promoting organizations. The newsletter is transmitted by Tom Jensen, in his temporary role as transmitter of the RMGA email Blasts. Send your articles to [Eileen Pearl](#).

RMGA Leadership Opportunities

Members are encouraged to volunteer to lead these committees:

- Certification (Must have the RMGA Colorado Certification)
- Email Distribution

Contact any Board member with your interest.

Are You Colo-Ready?

RMGA has become a Stewardship Partner with the Care for Colorado Coalition. Check out the RMGA logo alongside other Stewardship Partners at <https://www.colorado.com/care-colorado-coalition>. Watch for this logo on the RMGA website and the *Guide Line*:



As the summer tourist season winds down, it's good to get a refresher on the concepts that make up Care for Colorado. Check out this video describing "5 Steps to Care for Coloradans" produced by The Care for Colorado Coalition. [Video](#)

The ideas expressed in the video can't be an exhaustive list. What ideas is the video missing? Send your thoughts to the *Guide Line* [Editor](#).

What Are Our Guests Learning about Colorado?

Have you ever wondered about the advertising messages about Colorado that tourism offices are sending to other areas? It's prudent to be aware of those messages, because they set guest expectations. Here's one about "Black Canyon National Park: Your Park Awaits" Watch the [Video](#) produced by the Colorado Tourism Office.

Here's a video about Denver, "Family Friendly Denver" [Video](#), produced by VISIT Denver.

Tour Colorado, Colorado's link to the group tour industry, offers [Itineraries & Maps](#) on their website.

The ideas expressed in these videos can't be exhaustive lists. What ideas are missing in the videos? Send your thoughts to the *Guide Line* [Editor](#).

Colorado Concierge Training and Certification

[Colorado Concierge Training](#) is a free certification for frontline workers to become Colorado experts and grow their Colorado-style hospitality. The training is online at BeAColoradoConcierge.com. You can also download the app from [Google Play](#) or the [Apple App Store](#).

The training includes seven modules:

- Colorado Essentials
- The Care for Colorado Principles
- Colorado's Eight Travel Regions
- Colorado-Style Customer Service
- Colorado Traveler Safety
- Hunting & Fishing
- Inclusive Colorado Culture

Certified businesses, organizations, and individuals also receive the benefits outlined at <https://oedit.colorado.gov/colorado-concierge-training-and-certification>

Which RMGA members have attained Colorado Concierge Certification? What are your impressions of the program? Send your thoughts to the *Guide Line* [Editor](#).

NFTGA LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

Submitted by Mike Pearl, President

RMGA is a member of the National Federation of Tourist Guides (NFTGA), a collective of local tourist guides associations and guilds across the US. From time to time, RMGA Members receive notices from NFTGA via our email Blast system.

The September meeting featured a report from NFTGA vice president Janie Cardena of the Professional Tour Guide Association of San Antonio regarding NFTGA's biennial national conference. It will be held January 25-28, 2023, in San Antonio, Texas, at the Drury Plaza Hotel San Antonio Riverwalk.

You may want to tour the Alamo on Friday afternoon while you are there, then on Friday or Saturday night walk over to San Fernando Cathedral to see The Saga [The Saga - San Antonio](https://www.visitsanantonio.com/san-antonio-the-saga) <https://www.visitsanantonio.com/san-antonio-the-saga>.

For registration go to: www.nftgaregistration.com or go to the NFTGA webpage and click on the link.

To see resources for tour guides, go to NFTGA's [Guide Resources](#).

Find your next tour job at www.TourGuidingJobs.com!

Simply sign up for a free account and start looking through the job listings. We will be adding more jobs weekly as tour operators, destinations, attractions, and travel companies who send us their job opportunities looking for talented professionals like you!

UPDATE FROM OUR NEWEST MEMBER – ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOOD TOURS

Submitted by Samantha Wood, RMGA Member, www.rockymountainfoodtours.com, (719) 322-5731 (office)

At Rocky Mountain Food Tours, which operates in Colorado Springs, we had a record summer. We also expanded our private tour offerings to include custom culinary events in Old Colorado City, Manitou Springs, and even Denver. We partnered with nearly 30 restaurants and had a great time telling the story of our community through food!



Photo submitted by Rocky Mountain Food Tours.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Monday, October 3, 2022 (6:00 pm)

Monday, November 7, 2022 (6:00 pm)

Monday, December 5, 2022 (6:00 pm)

(Meetings via ZOOM; email Communications Committee Chair [Tom Jensen](#) for an invitation)

All Members are welcome and invited to attend.

MEMBERS MEETINGS

The second Monday of January, February, March, April, May, October, November, December

Monday, October 10, 2022 (6:00 pm) (In-person meeting with ZOOM availability; an invitation to attend via ZOOM is emailed to Members, who are encouraged to forward the invitation to prospective members.)

Monday, November 14, 2022 (6:00 pm) (Meeting via ZOOM or in person: watch for details; an invitation to attend is emailed to Members, who are encouraged to forward the invitation to prospective members.)

Monday, December 12, 2022 (6:00 pm) **The RMGA Membership Drive and Holiday Gathering!** (Meeting via ZOOM or in person: watch for details; an invitation to attend is emailed to Members, who are encouraged to forward the invitation to prospective members.)

PURPOSE of the ROCKY MOUNTAIN GUIDES ASSOCIATION

The nature of the business and activities of this Corporation is educational and the objects and purposes thereof to be transacted, promoted, or carried on are TO PROMOTE THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF COMPETENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM AMONG PERSONS WHO ACT AS TOUR GUIDES AND TOUR MANAGERS/ DIRECTORS, TO PROVIDE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AGAINST WHICH ALL TOUR GUIDES AND TOUR MANAGERS/DIRECTORS ARE MEASURED, and, in pursuing said basic purposes,

1. To hold meetings and familiarization (“FAM”) trips for the improvement and continuing education of its members;
2. To provide opportunities for the exchange of experiences and opinions regarding tour guides and tour managers/directors and their profession;
3. To provide a forum for development and promotion of common professional interests and concerns of tour guides and tour managers/directors;
4. To cooperate with other related and non-related organizations in a common endeavor to promote the profession of tour guiding, tour management and tour directing and to promote the public awareness of said profession. – *Articles of Incorporation*, Rocky Mountain Guides Association

Officers		
President	Mike Pearl	303-868-0023
Vice President	J. Mark Blaising	303-830-8440
Secretary	Dawn Nelsen	303-898-6853
Treasurer	Wendy Pickering	217-621-1960
Director-at-Large	David White	720-217-8643

Committee Chairpersons		
Certification		
Communications	Tom Jensen	303-968-0515
Education	David White	303-868-0023
Hospitality	Lily Ewing	303-250-9679
Membership	Mike Pearl	303-979-7594
Newsletter Editor	Eileen Pearl	303-868-0021
Program	J. Mark Blaising	303-830-8440
Public Relations	Tom Jensen	303-968-0515
Nominations	Mike Pearl	303-868-0023